



# **Arizona Families for Home Education Annual Convention**

**Saturday, July 23, 2011  
Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer**

Good morning, everyone!

And, thank you, Carol, for that warm introduction.

Carol does a wonderful job representing all of you at the Capitol – and she continues to build on the great work of your former president, and legislative liaison, Tom Lewis.

Carol and her husband, Keith, have been an integral part of this organization for a long time -- thank you for your service!

Let's also thank David Monk and his wife, Valerie, for not only serving on the BOARD for 16 years but also for serving as CONVENTION DIRECTORS for 14 years. That is incredible dedication -- for which we are all grateful. Thank you both.

It's great to be with you, again, at your annual convention, and I'm delighted to see that you haven't lost your enthusiasm -- or your passion -- for home education.

Well, neither have I.

Arizona Families for Home Education plays such an important role in the continued growth and success of our home-schooled students -- over 22,000 in the state and more than 10,000 in Maricopa County alone.

Many of you may know that AFHE has been supporting private, family-based home-schooling for 28 years ... but what you may NOT know is that Arizona is one of a few states with a statewide home-school advocacy organization that has lasted this long.

What a testament to the incredible leadership of the organization -- and the spirit of Arizona.

Most importantly, it is a demonstration of what ordinary parents working out of their living rooms and kitchens can accomplish to make a difference in their community.

It is also wonderful to be here with my friends U. S. Congressman Trent Franks and State Senator Rich Crandall.

Thank you, Senator Crandall, for your work on SB 1152. I was pleased to sign this bill.

What seemed to some as a mere technical correction, all of us here know that it was important to continue to make the distinction between what we consider traditional home-schooling and the newer world of virtual public schooling that may occur at home.

Education was what motivated me to get involved in public service. I was concerned about my children's education – as I know you are concerned about your children's education.

A key component of my policy agenda is to continue to find ways to enhance the role of parents. We know that the more involved parents are – the better students will do.

But, I also want to empower parents with INFORMATION so that they can make the best decisions.

One of the important steps that we took this year was to establish the website [www.arizonaschoolchoice.com](http://www.arizonaschoolchoice.com) – and Carol Shippy was a critical part of that effort. We are also currently in the process of renovating and updating that website.

The site is intended to help parents who are just beginning and exploring their choices. But once they've made that choice to home-school, it's critical that their choice – their FREEDOM is protected.

And, I pledge to you, I will continue to fight to protect your freedom to decide what is best for YOUR children.

And, last I checked, homeschoolers had a lot to be proud of:

-- A team of five Flagstaff home-schooled students won the Arizona LifeSmarts championship and went on to take 4th place in the National LifeSmarts Competition this spring in Hollywood, California.

Congratulations to Jordan Shute, Scott Bearchell , Grant Wiseman, Moriah Parks, and Aaron Parks.

-- Sarah Wright, a 14-year-old home-schooled student from Chandler, made it into the top 8 finishers in the 2011 Arizona Grammar Bowl – a competition inspired by Bob Safran and Senator Rich Crandall.

-- Home-schooled brothers, Jesse and Philip Ormand, from Tucson did exceptionally well in essay contests sponsored by the Arizona Chapter of Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Jesse placed 7th in the nation for the Patriot's Pen essay contest for middle school students. Philip, a high school junior, placed 4th in the state in the Voice of Democracy audio essay contest.

-- Cole Brauer of Cave Creek was awarded a 1<sup>st</sup> place medal at the 2011 Arizona Science and Engineering Fair in the middle school engineering category.

And, in addition to the first place medal, Cole was among 16 students who received the prestigious Naval Science Award from the Office of Naval Research in recognition of their outstanding projects.

-- Lauren Demarest, a 2011 home-school graduate from Gilbert, was recently named one of seven winners of the 2011 National Foundation for Women Legislators scholarship contest.

All winners participate in their Annual Conference and receive a \$3000 scholarship. Her sister, Kate, was a winner of the 2010 contest.

Arizona home-schoolers are no slouches in athletics either.

-- At the 2011 March Gladness Home-school Basketball Tournament in Riverside, California -- East Valley Athletes for Christ junior varsity girls placed first; the junior high boys placed second; and the west side's Arizona H.E.A.T. varsity boys placed 2<sup>nd</sup>.

And, on a personal note I know how well home-school students turn out.

One of the interns in my office -- who has been working hard with my policy advisors and legislative team -- was home-schooled. He's getting ready to graduate from ASU, and, in fact, he remembers attending conferences -- such as these -- with his mom while he was growing up.

He is here with my team today ... Michael Buster! Thank you, Michael.

While we talk about what home-schooling does for our CHILDREN, let me close by sharing with you what Helen Hegener, the co-publisher of *Home Education Magazine*, wrote about what her own home-schooled children taught HER.

She wrote that her children taught her life makes us ALL learners -- and that while some of us learn easily, others learn with more difficulty.

Her children taught her to listen with an open heart, and to see -- without making judgments.

They taught her patience, perseverance, and persistence ...

They taught her love does not bring conditions with it -- but that it just ... IS!

And, lastly, she wrote, her children made her a much better person than she would EVER have been without them.

So, thank you for the sacrifices that you are making for your children, your families, and ultimately our state.

Thank you for YOUR patience, perseverance, and persistence -- and for showing all of us that love does not bring conditions with it ... but that it just ... IS.

May God bless you -- and bless Arizona Families for Home Education -- and our Great State of Arizona.

And may God always bless and protect the United States of America.

Thank you.